Interim Policy and Guidelines for the Use of Vacant School Space

Finance and Administration Division

Alberta
EDUCATION

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INTERIM POLICY AND GUIDELINES

FOR THE

USE OF VACANT SCHOOL SPACE

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Finance and Administration
Alberta Education

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ALBERTA EDUCATION

INTERIM POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF VACANT SCHOOL SPACE (SECTION 104 OF THE SCHOOL ACT)

Policy

Vacant school space should be directed toward uses intended for the general public whenever possible and feasible.

Guidelines

1. School boards will be encouraged to give priority to the leasing of space to the following order of use:

(a) Public Sector

- means any activity controlled or operated by a level(s) of government, including public and separate school boards.

(b) Non-profit Sector

(including private schools for the handicapped (Category 11) attended by school board-directed pupils)

- means any activity controlled or operated by any non-profit corporation, society or association, which is legally registered in Alberta, has a local community based membership and is exempt from paying tax under the Federal Income Tax Act.
- includes early childhood services private operators.
- excludes all religious organizations.

(c) Private Sector

(including private schools)

- means any activity controlled or operated by any individual, corporation, group or organization, which does not come within the description of public sector uses or non-profit sector uses.
- includes private schools as defined in the Department of Education Act, excepting private schools for the handicapped (Category 11) attended by board-directed pupils.
- includes all religious organizations.

2. All leased space will be "callable", at the school board's wish, to be used for educational purposes.

3. For space leased to the public sector and non-profit groups:

   (a) space exemptions will be granted and debt retirement grants will continue; and

   (b) lease charges will be at cost or a nominal fee.

4. For space leased to the private sector including private schools/religious organizations:

   (a) space exemptions will not be granted.

   (b) debt retirement grants will continue, if

      (1) the debenture support is less than $1,000 per year for the total area leased in a school; and/or

      (2) the age of the area being leased is greater than 15 years and the total amount of outstanding debenture for Building Quality Restoration Program (B.Q.R.P.) and modernization projects is less than $100,000.

   (c) school boards may charge whatever level is deemed appropriate and if a profit is made, they may keep the proceeds.

5. The final decision as to the use of vacant school space will remain the responsibility of local school jurisdictions.

6. Individuals or corporations entering into a lease agreement with a school jurisdiction will have legal status acceptable to Alberta Education.

7. All leases are subject to final approval by the Minister or his designate.

(NOTE: The Minister or his designate after approving a proposed lease pursuant to Section 104(2) of the School Act, will determine whether the proposed lease comes within the public sector, non-profit sector or private sector use description.)

USE OF VACANT SCHOOL SPACE

A Table Matching Type of Use of Vacant School Space with Provincial Policy on Space Exemptions, Debt Retirement Support and Rent/Lease Charges

USE	SPACE EXEMPTION GRANTED	DEBT RETIREMENT SUPPORT CONTINUED	RENT/LEASE CHARGES
1. Public Sector	Yes	Yes	Cost or Nominal Fee
2. Non-Profit Sector (including E.C.S. Private Operators*)	Yes	Yes	Cost or Nominal Fee
3. Private Sector (Including Private Schools and Religious Organizations)	No	No **	No Maximum or Minimum

* Includes private schools for the handicapped (Category II) attended by school board-directed pupils. For example, if half the students attending such a school are board-directed, space exemption and debt retirement support (should there be any outstanding) would be prorated at 50% accordingly.

** Or, as per guideline item 4(b).